



Natural Heritage & Endangered
Species Program
MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
Route 135
Westborough, MA 01581-3337
508-792-7270 x 200

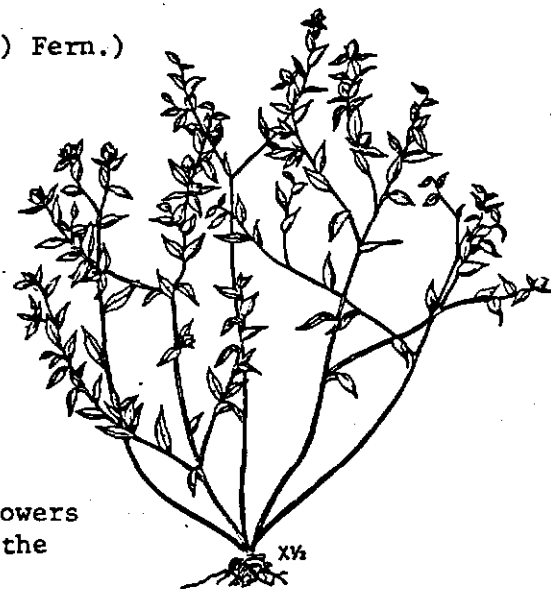
MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

BUSHY ROCKROSE

(Helianthemum dumosum (Bickn.) Fern.)

DESCRIPTION

Bushy Rockrose is a perennial herb, loosely branched spreading to reddish stems that form low mounds from 1-10" (2.5-25cm.) high. Stems are covered with short coarse hairs. Leaves are elliptic to narrowly oblong, usually 1/3-2/3" (8-15mm.) long, green above and pale below; very densely pubescent with simple and stellate (branched in star-like pattern) hairs. Bushy Rockrose has two kinds of flowers, maturing at different times during the season and at different positions on the plant. In late May to mid-June flowers with yellow petals appear singly and terminally on the main branches. Along branches produced in July to September grow self-pollinating flowers which lack petals and do not open.



Gleason, H.A. The New Britton and Brown
Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S.
and Adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden,
1932.

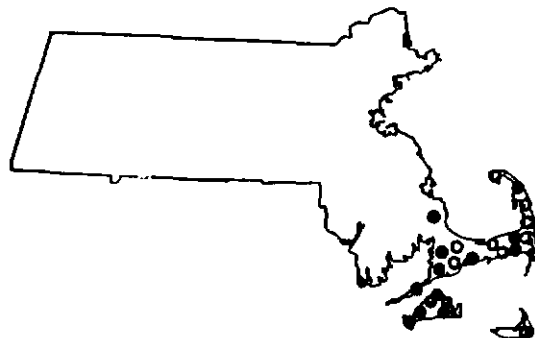
SIMILAR SPECIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

There are three other look-alike Rockrose species that occur within the habitat and range of Bushy Rockrose and could be easily mistaken for this species. Canadian Rockrose (H. canadense) is always erect, not as branched as Bushy Rockrose and is much less hairy. Low Rockrose (H. propinquum), a very uncommon species, has short ascending branches, prolific asexual flowers and only stellate hairs on the leaves and sepals. Hoary Frostweed (H. bicknellii) is usually unbranched, much taller, and covered with white fine stellate hairs.

(continued overleaf)



Distribution of Bushy Rockrose



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

BUSHY ROCKROSE (continued)

HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Bushy Rockrose inhabits dry, open sandplains, low-shrubby moors, and grassy openings in pine barrens. This plant seems to be intolerant of shade and moisture. Human altered habitats include cemeteries and golf course roughs. Species often found in the same habitat with Bushy Rockrose include Myrica pensylvanica (Bayberry), Arctostaphylos uva-ursi (Bearberry), Gaylussacia baccata (Black Huckleberry), and Andropogon scoparius (Little Bluestem).

RANGE

This species is endemic to southern New England and ranges from southeastern Massachusetts to Rhode Island and Long Island, New York.

POPULATION STATUS

Bushy Rockrose is considered a species of "Special Concern" in Massachusetts. Forty-nine occurrences have been verified from 1978 to the present; twenty-four other historical occurrences have also been recorded. This species has a very limited range. In addition, succession of its habitat to shrubs and forests, as well as loss of habitat to development, have contributed to its decline.